

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1028

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR CH XC
SUBJ: PRC MEDIA ON OVERSEAS CHINESE POLICY

REF: A) PEKING 986, B) PEKING 922

1. SUMMARY. PRC MEDIA HAVE BEGUN TO ADDRESS DIRECTLY PRC POLICY TOWARD CHINESE RESIDING ABROAD, PROBABLY IN ANTICIPATION OF A NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON OVERSEAS CHINESE WORK AND BECAUSE OF INCREASED INTEREST IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES. THE APRIL 13 ISSUE OF PEOPLE'S DAILY CARRIED A LONG ARTICLE BY AN OFFICIAL FORMERLY CONNECTED WITH OVERSEAS CHINESE WORK WHICH STATES THAT THEY WILL NOT BE USED AS A "FIFTH COLUMN" AGAINST OTHER COUNTRIES. THE PRC APPEARS ANXIOUS TO CONVINCE SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY INDONESIA AND SINGAPORE, THAT THERE IS NO CAUSE FOR CONCERN IN THE RENEWED PRC INTEREST IN
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OVERSEAS CHINESE. END SUMMARY.

2. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, PRC LEADERS AND THE OFFICIAL MEDIA HAVE GONE OUT OF THEIR WAY TO CLARIFY THE PRC POSITION ON OVERSEAS CHINESE. THE OVERSEAS CHINESE QUESTION HAS LONG BEEN A SORE SPOT IN THE PRC RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES,

PARTICULARLY INDONESIA AND SINGAPORE. PRC LEADERS NOW APPEAR TO BE ANXIOUS TO ALLAY SOUTHEAST ASIAN CONCERNS IN ORDER TO MOVE AHEAD WITH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA AND SINGAPORE.

3. THE PRC HAS NOW DIRECTLY ADDRESSED THE ISSUE, EXPANDING ON COMMENTS MADE BY VICE PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING TO VISITING PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK IN LAST MARCH (REF A). IN A LONG APRIL 13 PEOPLE'S DAILY ARTICLE, A FORMER OVERSEAS CHINESE AFFAIRS OFFICIAL LIEN KUAN BLUNTLY STATED THAT THE PRC HAS NO INTENTION OF USING OVERSEAS CHINESE AS A "FIFTH COLUMN." STATEMENTS THAT THE PRC PURSUES A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH OVERSEAS CHINESE ARE "FALSE SLANDERS" TRUMPED UP BY THE "GANG OF FOUR," LIN PIAO, AND ESPECIALLY THE SOVIET UNION, LIEN INSISTS. IN FACT, THE SOVIET UNION SEEKS TO "DESTROY THE PRC'S INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE, ISOLATE CHINA" AND "SEEK HEGEMONY" OVER SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE WHOLE WORLD.

4. LINE ALSO DETAILS THE LONG HISTORY OF CHINESE MOVEMENT TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD BEGINNING IN THE TANG DYNASTY AND MORE RECENTLY WITH "CONTRACT LABOR" ARRANGEMENTS LURING CHINESE TO THE UNITED STATES AND LATIN AMERICA. LIEN REPEATS PRC POLICY THAT:
--OVERSEAS CHINESE SHOULD ADOPT THE NATIONALITY
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OF THE COUNTRY OF THEIR RESIDENCE;
--IF THEY ARE UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO ADOPT FOREIGN CITIZENSHIP, THEY SHOULD STRICTLY ADHERE TO LOCAL LAWS AND CUSTOMS;
-- THE PRC DOES NOT RECOGNIZE DUAL NATIONALITY.

5. LIEN'S ARTICLE APPEARS TO BE PART OF A SERIES ANTICIPATING THE UPCOMING NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON OVERSEAS CHINESE WORK. IN ADDITION, GOVERNMENT OFFICES DEALING WITH OVERSEAS CHINESE AFFAIRS HAVE BEEN RECREATED (REF B). LIEN INSISTS THERE IS NO CAUSE FOR CONCERN SINCE THE PRC INTENDS TO OBSERVE FULLY THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WHICH PLEDGES PRC NON-INVOLVEMENT IN OTHER NATIONS' INTERNAL AFFAIRS. ON THE CONTRARY, LIEN CONCLUDES, "WE DEEPLY BELIEVE FOLLOWING THE COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARTY'S POLICY ON OVERSEAS CHINESE AFFAIRS, THAT THE BROAD MASSES OF OVERSEAS CHINESE WILL MAKE AN EVEN GREATER CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRIENDLY AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COUNTRY OF THEIR RESIDENCE AND THE MOTHERLAND."
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